

Original Poems

By

Rev. Hamilton Wile, B. A.

AUTUMN LEAVES.

IT seems to me that leaves can
talk :

I hear them whisper as I walk
Along and crunch them 'neath my
feet;

Their very death-notes rise to
greet

Me with their plaintive wails and
sighs,—

So like the swan that, singing,
dies.

We say they're dead and now
must find

A lonely grave, perhaps behind
Some rotten log or old board
fence;

Alas, poor leaves, vain recom-
pense !

I watched them grow as thick as
spawn,

And silent as the op'ning dawn.
They caught the sunbeams as they
flew,

And sipped the gases from the
dew.

They looked like phantoms in the
sky,

Or fledgings, trying hard to fly.
I walked beneath them in the
glade,

Where little children romped and
played

Upon the green, and chased chip-
munks

Around the stumps or hollow
trunks.

How proudly perched upon the
trees,

These leaves sat, swinging in the
breeze.

Some on the elm o'er lovers hung
Like beads upon a neck-lace
strung.

Some graced the maple, high and
grand,—

The emblem of our native land.

Beach, oak, and poplar, bore their
share,

But now, mixed up by frenzied
air,

They hurry scurry o'er the
ground,

Or nestle by a new-made mound.

I see them crouching in the grass,

Or circle round the feet that pass

Below the boughs, where yester-
day,

The dew-drop on their bosom lay.

Ah, leaves, sarcophagi of rare

And glorious life! I wonder where

Your spirit now has flown;

Or were you just a bubble blown

To let more life invest the tree,

And is no future waiting thee?

Or will you in some far off year

Rejuvenate and re-appear

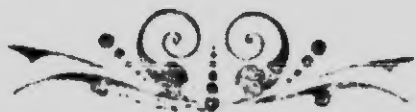
In pale or brown, or gold or
green,
And from your sepulchre unseen
Crawl through the fibre of the
tree,
And claim eternity with me ?
But I can't leave you in the cold.
I'll pick up all my arms will hold,
And tell to you my thoughts, and
see
That none shall know but you
and me.

I'll name you all and give you
dates,
In mem'ry of some old school-
mates ;
For fellowships in God's mute
sphere
Are next to human friendships
here.
Methinks I'll spread them on the
floor,
And sort them out and look them
o'er.
This tiny little pink will look
Just lovely in my kodak book.

These brown ones here were so
opaque,
I thought at first I wouldn't take
Them, but they somehow made
me think
They'd look so sweet besides the
pink,

I'll take them out to mother's
grave;
They seem so full of thought,
'Twill save
Them from a premature decay,—
I hope they won't all blow away.
This crimson one with golden rim,
I'll send it overseas to Jim.
He picked up one like this last fall
And pinned it on my scarlet
shawl.

Well, Leaves ! I've learned a lot
from you
Of friendship, sympathy — I true
Fond love, and yet I feel you are
But one small note, in the long
bar
Which goes to make the music
swell
In the larger life in which I dwell.
But through the cycles of the
spheres
I'll not forget these joys and
tears.
One part of that Eternity
Will be what leaves awoke in me.
The mem'ry of our earthly bond
Will live with me in Worlds
Beyond.



PARTING A' THE PIER.

THIS Poem was suggested by the parting scenes witnessed at Glasgow, August 2nd, when forty-one Scotch girls embarked on the S. S. Letitia, to find homes and employment in Canada.



Sae we're aboot tae pairt, lassie,
Ye're gangin' o'er the sea ;
And may the God O' Jacob, lassie,
Hae watch 'twixt thee and me.

We're laith tae let ye gae, lassie,
Though it's better for ye'r sake ;
For the fauld is full o'bairns,
lassie,
And the livin' is hard tae make.

And noo tae say guid-by, lassie,
Maist stairts mae hert tae bleed ;
It's like that awfu' day, lassie,
When Bobbie waned and deed.

They're singin' "Auld Lang
Syne" lassie,
I ken it's time tae stairt ;
I'll lead ye tae the gang,' lassie
And bless thee ere we pairt.

Ye'll keep the Lord's commands,
lassie,
And trust Him for his grace ;
Ye'll join us in the prayer, lassie,
About the chimney-place.

Just tak' this little book, lassie,
'Twill help ye when ye're sad ;
Mae father did the same, lassie,
When I was but a lad.

Ye'll ne'er forget us a' lassie—
Ye'r dear auld Heeland hame—
But while ye bide awa', lassie,
'Twill never be the same.

Mind there'll be lovin' herts,
lassie,
Awaitin' here for thee,
When ye come back again, lassie,
Tae ye'r ain countrie.

This was the Prize Poem in a contest held on ship-board, under the direction of a hundred delegates returning to America from the world's Sunday School Convention at Zurich, Switzerland, July 1913.



MY BOOKS.

No witch of Endor can conjure
Such prophets, bards, or connoisseurs,
As can be raised at your command,
From ev'ry age and ev'ry land.

In thee I felt great Plato's mind,
And thoughts from Shakespeare
oft would find,
Which put me in succession fast
With all the culture of the past.

And as my eye ran o'er each page,
I had communion with the sage,
Till in my fancy, on the wall,
I saw the portraits of them all.

And thus in Latin, French, or
Greek,
I heard those ancient sages speak.
Dear Books, what faithful comrades all
As, year by year, you grace the
wall !

The same soft air and mellow
light,
Which made you brown, have
turned me white.
When I am gone, I fear that none
Will care for you as I have done.

No one can love you like myself.
I 'ranged you there in reg'lar
rows,
And kept you dusted like my
clothes.
What will become of my old
books ?

I did not choose them just for
looks ;
They lured me by their wealth of
lore.
For all the lofty themes they bore
Awoke in me a rapture sweet,

That made their pages my retreat.
So these dear books may not
 reveal
A charm that other hearts will
 feel.

They've been to me just what
 they would
Not be to others if they could.
Ah, Masters of refining Art,
Who stored my brain and stirred
 my heart !

How often you have had to wait
Till my vagaries would abate ;
Then this mixed mind to you was
 turned,
And there the larger truths were
 learned.

When Faith had lost her self-
 control,
You tranquilized my billowed soul
With thoughts, that often made
 me feel
A life-throb, o'er my spirit steal.

And when my tears streamed on
 the mat ;
Or when I stroked the knowing
 cat ;
You stood as mourners all about,
And watched the cup of grief run
 out.

My deepest secrets thus are hid
Right there inside your coverlid.
It sends a shudder through the
heart

To think that we shall ever part.

I hope, when I am under ground,
They won't leave you to lie
around

Some musty loft or cellar floor,
And let your pages all get tore.

Well books, dear books, adieu !
I'll take one more fond look at
you,

And run my eye along the line
Of my old friends ; yes mine, all
mine.

I trust, wherever you may be,
Your keepers wont, for sake of me,
Scratch out the names I wrote in
tears,

Far back in unforgotten years,
Nor rase the marks I made in you,
when first I read your pages
through.



THE GOLDEN RULE

I F you meet fellows on the road,
Who can't manipulate their
load,
Don't start to judge and then con-
demn,

And say you won't take stock in
them,
Because they don't look sleek like
you,
Or act as pious as a Jew ;
For they've been living in a place
Where people never say the
grace :
The highest ethics of their school
Is measured by "The Golden
Rule."

Don't knock the fellow who gets
drunk,
And say his p'edges all were punk.
If you feel hot, just kick yourself
For letting any man, for pelf,
Sell bottled Hell to that poor soul,
Which made him lose his self
control.

What Christian took him by the
hand ?
What deacon tried to help him
stand ?
Who took him to the Sunday
School ?
Or read to him "The Golden
Rule ?"
Don't spurn that miner on the
street,
Or gauge the ditcher by his feet.
When you are in the House of
Prayer,

They're in the muck, God knows
just where,
While they build sew'rs and mine
our coal,
We act as if they had no soul.
Don't say these toilers have no
friend ;
That God will drop them in the
end ;
Though you may think them
rough or cru'l,
Still they may keep " The Golden
Rule."

Don't shy that fellow sued for
rent,
Or that poor beggar, blind and
bent.
Who knows what sweat-shop
broke him down.
Or landlord drove him from the
town.
Perhaps, if all the truth were
known,
The grafter robbed him of his
own.

Don't say there can't be any good
In those who hav'nt funds or food,
For Laz'rus at old Dives' stool
Somehow had kept " The Golden
Rule."

Don't thump that lubber on the
deck,
Or yank that gaffer by the neck ;

They live the best they understand,
In such a life on sea and land.
The only Christ those men can find
Is in the sunshine or the wind.
Perhaps the holiest shrine they
see
Is 'mongst the trees or in the lee,
They celebrate no Christmas-
Yule :
Their faith lies in "The Golden
Rule."

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THE POOL

WHAT modern notion can it be
Has changed the public mind
toward me ?
Once I was told if I left here,
The village couldn't live a year.
But now they turn around and
say,
"Take that old nuisance away".
Tuber'clar germs some seem to
think,
Are in the water that I drink.
They say I'm dirty, foul and bad ;
And call me names as if they're
mad.
I've seen them turning up their
nose,
Because I smelled queer, I
suppose.

One can't be always clean and
sweet

When men dump refuse at your
feet.

Upon my banks they heap the
muck

Of barnyard pens, and all the
truck

That gathers round the wood-shed
doors,

And sweepings from the greasy
floors.

Then people loathe me, curse me
o'er,

And claim I'm spreading germs
galore.

Some say the children I may kill,
And fill the grave-yard on the
hill.

When folks plant flower-beds and
trees,

They'll have no trouble with
disease.

I'm like the river to the sea—

I give them back what they
give me.

In all the world there's not a clod
Can mirror back the works of
God ;

But every form that passes by
Can see its image where I lie.

Just stand beside me and see how
I'll photograph you on my
brow.

Your noble features I'll express ;
Your hidden vices I'll suppress ;
I hold the blade of mossy grass,
And catch the butterflies that
pass.

Then I portray the swallows too,
And ev'ry thorn-bush tipped
with dew ;

The little lambs that near me play
And gambol through the live-
long day

I take ; and herds that stand and
drink,
Or chew their cud beside my
brink.

The pic-nic groups sit on my
bank,

And sail across me on a plank.
Some bridal parties here I've
seen ;

I took them sitting on the green.
At ev'ning in the hot July

My water-lilies they would spy ;
A raft of boards they'd improvise
And 'mid the shouts and
screams and cries,

Each lover stretched his very best
To pluck a flower for his
guest.

The broken-hearted oft have crept
Close to my side and there-have
wept ;

And when they brought to me
their tears

I held them sacred through the
years.
My comfort I would sacrifice,
And groan beneath a sheet of
ice,
So all the people in the place
Could skate and slide and pony-
race.
Those folks now say that I'm a
curse,
And claim that nothing could
be worse
Around the village and the school,
Than that polluted water-pool.
Some say, I hear, they'll dig a
trench
"To put an end to all that
stench".

I've furnished them with mirth
and glee,
But now, I'm ordered out to
sea ;
For though a friend, once prized
so high,
They'll let me leave without a
sigh.
If I must go I'll steal away ;
You'll miss me at the break of
day.
So like the dear old dying year
I'll in the gloaming disappear.

A TEAR.

Thou symbol of the soul's domain !

What far off regions do you drain ?

Were you condensed from ambient air ?

Or were you born of dark despair ?

Did some fierce fire far within,

From ardent love or sudden sin,

Burn outward from the very core ?

Or did a foeman break the door

Of faith ? And did the tempter bold,

Thy timid soul attempt to hold ?

Then does that tear give silent vent

To all the strength thy soul hath spent ?

Is it the sign of overflow

Of love for truth's relentless foe ?

I know how it can carry hence

The venom of some sore offence.

Ah, tear ! you are a lake to drown

A care, disintegrate a frown.

And on the mercy of your shore

I find a resting-place, far more

Secure, than on the river-sands,

Flushed by a hundred shake-of-hands.



